

# Biographies

## PEOPLE WHO SHAPED LINCOLN'S LIFE

### INTRODUCTION

Abraham Lincoln did not exist in a vacuum and many people were instrumental in shaping his life—for better or worse. These biographies of some of the significant figures in Lincoln's life have been compiled from a variety of easily found sources. They are meant to give very basic information and a place to start your research. See the reading lists at the end of your Volunteer Reference if you would like to find out more.

### PLAZA FIGURES

#### MARY LINCOLN

Born in 1818 into the aristocratic family of Eliza Parker and Robert Smith Todd, Mary was part of a wealthy Lexington, Kentucky family. She lost her mother before the age of seven and described her childhood as “desolate.”

A petite 5 feet 2 inches, Mary had blue eyes and light-brown hair. She is said to have danced gracefully; she loved finery, and had a lively intelligence and sharp wit.

In 1838, Mary went to Springfield, Illinois, to live with her sister Elizabeth, wife of Ninian Edwards. Here she met Abraham Lincoln—in his own words, “a poor nobody then.” On November 4, 1842, after a stormy courtship and a broken engagement, they were married.

Their years in Springfield brought hard work, a family of boys, and reduced circumstances to the pleasure-loving girl who had felt little responsibility before. Lincoln's single term in Congress, 1847-1849, gave Mary and the boys a winter in Washington, but little opportunity for social life.

Though her position fulfilled her high social ambitions, Mrs. Lincoln's years in the White House mingled misery with triumph. An orgy of spending stirred resentful comment. While the Civil War dragged on, Southerners scorned her as a traitor to her birth, and citizens loyal to the Union suspected her of treason. When she entertained, critics accused her of unpatriotic extravagance. When, utterly distraught, she curtailed her entertaining after her son Willie's death in 1862, they accused her of shirking her social duties.

Yet Lincoln, watching her put her guests at ease during a White House reception, could say happily: “My wife is as handsome as when she was a girl, and I . . . fell in love with her; and what is more, I have never fallen out.”



Her husband's assassination in 1865 shattered Mary Lincoln. The next seventeen years held nothing but sorrow. With her son Tad she traveled abroad in search of health, tortured by distorted ideas of her financial situation. After Tad died in 1871, she slipped into a world of illusion where poverty and murder pursued her.

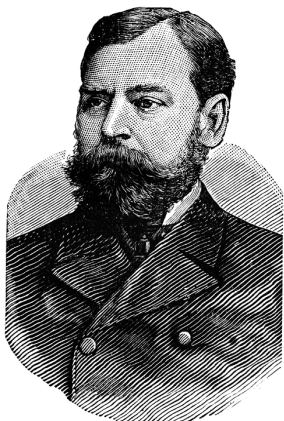
Her mental condition continued to deteriorate. Fearing for her safety, her son Robert had her institutionalized in Batavia, Illinois in 1875. She was released a few months later but her relationship with her son was never fully restored.

A misunderstood and tragic figure, she passed away in 1882 at her sister's home in Springfield—the same house from which she had walked as the bride of Abraham Lincoln, forty years before.

## ROBERT TODD LINCOLN

Robert Todd Lincoln, first child of Mary and Abraham, was born on August 1, 1843, in a boarding house called the Globe Tavern in Springfield. He was named after Mary's father, Robert Smith Todd.

As Robert grew up, it became apparent that he was of a stocky build and would never have the long-boned leanness of his father. When Robert was only three years old, his father wrote, "Bob is short and low and, I expect, always will be."



In his boyhood years, Robert seems to have had a different personality than the rest of the family—he was more shy and reticent. He did not have the outgoing enthusiasm of his brothers and he seems to have lacked the personal magnetism of his father and the vivacious quality of his mother.

Robert was the only one of the Lincoln sons who lived into adulthood. He graduated from Harvard College in 1864. After four months at Harvard Law School, he was commissioned a captain on the staff of General Grant and was present at the surrender of Robert E. Lee at Appomattox Courthouse.

Taking up the practice of law in Chicago in 1869, he became very successful as a lawyer and businessman. In 1897 he became president of the Pullman Car Company and he also served as director for the Commonwealth Edison Company, the Chicago Telephone Company, and several other business concerns. In addition, he played a distinguished role in government, serving as secretary of war under Presidents Garfield and Arthur. He was later appointed minister to Great Britain by President Benjamin Harrison.

Robert died at his summer home, Hildene in Manchester, Vermont on July 26, 1926, a few days before his eighty-third birthday. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery and is not interred with the rest of his family in the Lincoln Tomb.

### EDWARD BAKER (EDDIE) LINCOLN

While no images of Eddie exist and he is not depicted in the ALPM Plaza, he is an important part of the Lincoln family. The second child of Mary and Abraham, Eddie was born on March 10, 1846, in the Lincoln home on Eighth and Jackson Streets. He was named after Edward Baker, a friend and political ally of Lincoln's. Just a month before his fourth birthday, Eddie died in the family home after a long illness that was listed as "chronic consumption," believed today to be tuberculosis.

Because he died so young, only a few impressions of him have survived. Mrs. Lincoln wrote of an occasion when Robert brought home a kitten. When Eddie "spied it his tenderness broke forth, he made them bring it water, fed it with bread himself, with his own dear hands, he was a delighted little creature over it."

On the day that Lincoln said farewell to the people of Springfield as he left for the White House, he thought of Eddie. Summing up what Springfield had meant to him, he said: "To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born and one is buried."

### WILLIAM WALLACE (WILLIE) LINCOLN

The third child of Mary and Abraham Lincoln, Willie, was born on December 21, 1850, in the family home in Springfield. He was named for his Uncle William Wallace, Mary's brother-in-law. Willie was described as being amiable, cheerful, mature for his age, and the son who was the most popular with his playmates. His mother said that Willie "was a very beautiful boy, with a most spiritual expression of face."

Willie died of typhoid fever in the White House on February 20, 1862, at the age of 11, while his father was president.



### THOMAS (TAD) LINCOLN



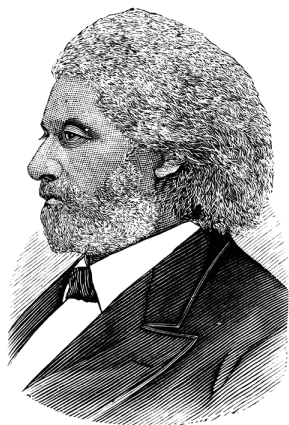
The youngest child of Mary and Abraham, Thomas, was born on April 4, 1853, in the Lincoln home in Springfield. He was named after Lincoln's father, Thomas, but Abraham nicknamed him Tad, short for Tadpole, apparently because of his appearance as an infant.

Tad died of tuberculosis on July 15, 1871, at the age of 18. His death was a great loss to his mother, because she had depended upon him for love, companionship, and understanding after his father's death.

## FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in Maryland in 1818. He was named Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey, after his mother Harriet Bailey. During his life he escaped from slavery, became internationally renowned for his eloquence in the cause of liberty, and served the government in several official capacities. His early work in the cause of freedom brought him into contact with a wide array of abolitionists and social reformers, including William Lloyd Garrison, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, John Brown, and Gerrit Smith. As a stationmaster on the Underground Railroad he directly helped hundreds on their way to freedom.

Famous for his eloquence, Douglass lectured throughout the United States and England on the brutality and immorality of slavery. As a publisher, his *North Star* and *Frederick Douglass' Paper* brought news of the anti-slavery movement to thousands. Forced to leave the country to avoid arrest after John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, he returned to become a staunch advocate of the Union cause. He helped recruit African-American troops for the Union Army, and his personal relationship with Lincoln helped persuade the president to make emancipation a cause of the Civil War. Two of Douglass's sons served in the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, which was made up entirely of African-American volunteers.



All of Douglass' children were from his marriage to Anna Murray. He met Murray, a free African American, in Baltimore while he was still enslaved. They were married soon after his escape to freedom.

In 1872, Douglass moved to Washington, D.C. where he initially served as publisher of the *New National Era*. The publication was discontinued when its financial backing failed to materialize. In this period Douglass also served briefly as president of the Freedmen's National Bank, and in various government positions, including U. S. Marshal for the District of Columbia, and diplomatic positions in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

After the death of his wife Anna in 1882, Douglass married his former secretary, Helen Pitts. Douglass dismissed the controversy over his marriage to a white woman, saying that in his first marriage he had honored his mother's race, and in his second marriage, his father's.

Shortly after returning home from a National Council of Women meeting, Frederick Douglass died on February 20, 1895. He is buried in Mount Hope Cemetery in Rochester, New York.

## SOJOURNER TRUTH

Sojourner Truth was born about 1797 into slavery in New York as Isabella Baumfree. She was sold several times, and while owned by the John Dumont family, married Thomas, another of Dumont's slaves. She had five children with Thomas. In 1827, New York law emancipated all slaves, but Isabella had already left her husband and run away with her youngest child. She went to work for the family of Isaac Van Wageningen.

While working for the Van Wagenen she discovered that a member of the Dumont family had sold one of her children to slavery in Alabama. Since this son had been emancipated under New York law, Isabella sued in court and won his return.

In 1843, she took the name Sojourner Truth, believing this to be on the instructions of the Holy Spirit, and became a traveling preacher. In the late 1840s she connected with the abolitionist movement, becoming a popular speaker. In 1850, she also began speaking on woman suffrage. Her most famous speech, *Ain't I a Woman?*, was given in 1851 at a women's rights convention in Ohio.



That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

Sojourner Truth met Harriet Beecher Stowe, who wrote about her for the *Atlantic Monthly* and wrote a new introduction to Truth's autobiography, *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth*.

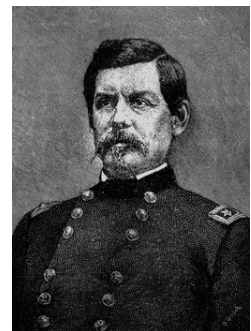
During the Civil War Sojourner gathered food and clothing for black regiments and met Abraham Lincoln at the White House in 1864. While there, she tried to challenge the discrimination that divided streetcars by race.

After the Civil War, Sojourner again spoke widely, advocating a "Negro State" in the west. She spoke mainly to white audiences about a variety of subjects including religion, African-American and women's rights, and temperance. She also tried to organize efforts to provide jobs for black refugees from the war.

She was active until 1875, when her grandson and companion fell ill and died. She then returned to Michigan where her health deteriorated and she died in 1883 in a Battle Creek sanitarium. She was buried in Battle Creek, Michigan, after a very well-attended funeral.

## GEORGE MCCLELLAN

George Brinton McClellan was born on December 3, 1826, in Philadelphia. He attended the University of Pennsylvania but did not graduate. In 1842, McClellan received an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point where he graduated in 1846, ranking second in his class. After his graduation, McClellan participated in the U.S.-Mexican War. He also traveled extensively in Europe and studied European military tactics.





He resigned his army commission in 1857 and became involved in the railroad industry. Using his engineering training, he served as an engineer for the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad and the Illinois Central Railroad. With the beginning of the Civil War, he reenlisted in the United States Army.

In the fall of 1861, General McClellan led a Union army into western Virginia to hold this territory for the North. In this campaign, he successfully defeated two Confederate forces. He secured the region for the Union and enhanced his reputation as a skillful military commander. After the Union loss at the First Battle of Bull Run, President Abraham Lincoln appointed McClellan commander of the Army of the Potomac. He spent the remainder of 1861 recruiting and training volunteers.

McClellan's 1862 attack on Richmond, Virginia, the Peninsula Campaign, was unsuccessful. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia attacked in the late summer of 1862 and McClellan's task was to pursue him and to drive the Confederates back into the South.



McClellan found Lee's army at Sharpsburg, Maryland and on September 17, the Battle of Antietam began. Although McClellan's army outnumbered Lee's, the battle ended in a draw. The Confederates retreated back into Virginia and ended the Army of Northern Virginia's first invasion of the North.

President Lincoln believed that had McClellan moved more quickly he would have had a chance to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia. Due to McClellan's cautious approach, Lincoln decided to remove him from command of the Army of the Potomac in November 1862 and replaced him with General Ambrose Burnside. McClellan never received another military command.

McClellan became one of Lincoln's chief critics. In 1864, the Democratic Party selected McClellan as its presidential candidate. The party wanted to adopt a platform condemning the war effort and demanding an immediate end to the conflict. While McClellan wanted an immediate end to the war, he was unwilling to condemn the war effort as a complete failure. Lincoln won the election and McClellan resigned his commission in the United States Army on the day of the election.

McClellan spent the last years of his life in New Jersey. He was elected governor of the state and served from 1878 to 1881. He died on October 29, 1885.

## ULYSSES S. GRANT

Born Hiram Ulysses Grant on April 27, 1822, he was son of an Ohio tanner. Grant entered the United States Military Academy at West Point at age seventeen, where because of an error; he took the name Ulysses S. Grant. In 1846, three years after graduating, Grant served as a lieutenant in the Mexican-American War under Winfield

Scott and future president Zachary Taylor. After the Mexican-American War concluded in 1848, Grant remained in the Army, but abruptly resigned in 1854. Struggling through the coming years as a real estate agent, a laborer, and a county engineer, Grant decided to join the war effort.



Appointed brigadier general of volunteers in 1861 by Lincoln, Grant claimed the first major Union victories of the war in 1862, capturing Forts Henry and Donelson in Tennessee. He was surprised by a Confederate attack at the Battle of Shiloh, and although he emerged victorious, the severe casualties prompted a public outcry. Subsequently, however, Grant's 1863 victory at Vicksburg, and his rescue of the Union army at Chattanooga, established his reputation as Lincoln's most aggressive and successful general. Named lieutenant general and general-in-chief of the Army in 1864, Grant implemented a coordinated strategy of simultaneous attacks aimed at destroying the South's armies and its economy's ability to sustain its forces. In 1865, after mounting a successful war of attrition against his Confederate opponents, he accepted the surrender of General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox court house.

Popular due to the Union victory in the Civil War, Grant was elected president as a Republican in 1868 and was re-elected in 1872. When he assumed the presidency, Grant had never before held elected office and, at the age of 46, was the youngest person yet elected to that office.

As president, Grant led Reconstruction and built a powerful patronage-based Republican Party in the South, straining relations between the North and former Confederates. His administration was marred by repeated scandals including an attempt to corner the gold market and bribery in the Treasury and War Departments.

Grant left office in 1877 and went on a two-year world tour. In 1884, Grant learned that he was suffering from terminal throat cancer. Unsuccessful in winning the nomination for a third term in 1880, left destitute by bad investments, and near the brink of death, Grant wrote his *Memoirs*, which were enormously successful. Two days after completing his writing, Grant died on July 23, 1885 at the age of 63.

## JOHN WILKES BOOTH

John Wilkes Booth was born in Bel Air, Maryland, on May 10, 1838. He was the ninth of ten children born to the famous actor, Junius Brutus Booth.

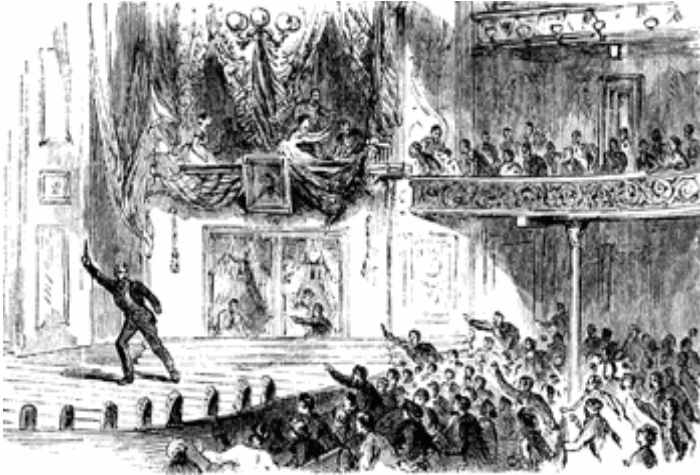
Booth made his acting debut at the age of seventeen in Baltimore. He toured throughout America and soon became one of America's leading actors and was especially acclaimed for the work he did with the Shakespearean company that was based in Richmond.

Unlike the rest of his family, Booth was an ardent supporter of slavery. In 1859 he joined the Virginia militia company that assisted in the capture of John Brown at Harper's Ferry.



Although Booth had a deep hatred for President Abraham Lincoln and the Republican Party, he did not join the Confederate Army on the outbreak of the Civil War. Instead he worked as a secret agent and helped to smuggle medical supplies from the North to the Confederate forces in the South. As a touring actor Booth had the perfect cover for this work.

In 1864 Booth devised a scheme to kidnap Abraham Lincoln in Washington, D.C. The plan was to take Lincoln to Richmond and hold him until he could be exchanged for Confederate Army prisoners of war. Others involved in the plot included Lewis Powell, George Atzerodt, John Surratt, David Herold, Michael O'Laughlin and



Samuel Arnold. Booth decided to carry out the plan on March 17, 1865, when Lincoln was planning to attend a play at the Seventh Street Hospital. The kidnap attempt was abandoned when Lincoln decided at the last moment to cancel his visit.

Two days after Lee's surrender to Grant, Booth heard Abraham Lincoln make a speech endorsing the idea of voting rights for some African Americans. Booth was furious and decided to assassinate the president before he could carry out these plans.

Booth persuaded most of the people who had been involved in the kidnap plot to join him in his assassination plan. Booth discovered that on April 14, Lincoln was planning to attend the evening performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theatre. Booth decided he would assassinate Lincoln while George Atzerodt and Lewis Powell would kill Vice President Andrew Johnson and Secretary of State William Seward. All attacks would take place at approximately 10:15 that night.

Booth, armed with a derringer pistol and a hunting knife, arrived at the theatre at about 9:30 PM. John Burroughs, a boy who worked at the theatre, was asked to hold his horse while he went to a nearby saloon for a drink. Booth entered Ford's Theatre soon after 10:00 PM and made his way to the Lincoln's box. John Parker, Lincoln's bodyguard, had left his position outside the box to get a drink. Inside were Abraham Lincoln, his wife Mary Lincoln, and two friends, Major Henry Rathbone and his fiancée, Clara Harris.

At 10:15PM Booth entered the box and shot Abraham Lincoln in the back of the head. When Rathbone attempted to grab Booth he was slashed with the hunting knife. Booth then jumped to the stage below. He landed badly and snapped the fibula bone in his left leg just above the ankle.

Meanwhile Lewis Powell had attacked William Seward in his house. Although Seward was badly wounded, he survived. George Atzerodt, lost his nerve, and never made his assassination attempt on Andrew Johnson. The plan was for the conspirators to meet at the boarding house owned by Mary Surratt in Surrattsville, Maryland. After a brief stop to pick up supplies, Booth and David Herold left for the meeting place.



At 4:00 the next morning, Booth and Herold arrived at the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd who treated Booth's broken leg. With the help of other sympathizers they reached Port Royal, Virginia, on the morning of April 26. They hid in a barn owned by Richard Garrett. However, federal troops arrived soon afterwards and the men were ordered to surrender.

David Herold came out of the barn but Booth refused and so the barn was set on fire. While this was happening one of the soldiers, Sergeant Boston Corbett, found a large crack in the barn and was able to shoot Booth in the back. His body was dragged from the barn and he died two hours later.

## JOURNEY ONE FIGURES & IMAGES

### DANIEL WEBSTER

Daniel Webster was born in Salisbury, N.H., on January 18, 1782. A farmer's son, he graduated from Dartmouth College in 1801 and after a legal apprenticeship, opened a legal practice in Portsmouth, N.H., in 1807.



Rising quickly as a lawyer and Federalist Party leader, Webster was elected to the House of Representatives because of his opposition to the War of 1812, which had crippled New England's shipping trade. After two more terms in the House, Webster left Congress in 1816 and moved to Boston. Over the next six years, he won major constitutional cases before the Supreme Court, establishing himself as the nation's leading lawyer and an outstanding orator. In 1823, Webster was returned to Congress from Boston, and in 1827 he was elected senator from Massachusetts.

New circumstances enabled Webster to become a champion of American nationalism. With the Federalist Party dead, he joined the National Republican party, allying himself with Henry Clay and endorsing federal aid for roads in the West. In 1828, the dominant economic interests of Massachusetts having shifted from shipping to manufacturing, Webster backed the high-tariff bill of that year. Angry Southern leaders condemned the tariff, and South Carolina's John C. Calhoun argued that his state had the right to nullify the law. Webster defended the Union and his words, "liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable," won wide acclaim.

In 1841, President William Henry Harrison named Webster secretary of state. The death of Harrison brought John Tyler to the presidency, and in September 1841 all the Whigs but Webster resigned from the cabinet. Webster remained to settle a dispute with Great Britain involving the Maine-Canada boundary. Whig pressure finally induced Webster to leave the cabinet in May 1843.

The annexation of Texas in 1845 and the resulting war with Mexico, both opposed by Webster, forced the country to face the issue of the expansion of slavery. Webster opposed such expansion but feared even more the dissolution of the Union over the dispute. In a speech before the Senate on March 7, 1850, he supported the

Compromise of 1850, denouncing Southern threats of secession but urging Northern support for a stronger law for the recovery of fugitive slaves. Webster was named secretary of state in July 1850 by President Millard Fillmore and supervised the strict enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act. Webster's stand alienated antislavery forces and divided the Whig party, but it helped to preserve the Union.

## HENRY CLAY

Henry Clay was born on April 12, 1777, in Hanover County, Virginia. He studied law with George Wythe, mentor of Thomas Jefferson and John Marshall. At 20, Clay moved to Kentucky and quickly established himself as a successful lawyer. His speaking skills, friendly manner, and his penchant for gambling and drinking made him immensely popular. Clay served at various times in the Kentucky state legislature, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the Senate.



As speaker of the house, Clay was a prominent war hawk, pushing for expansion and war with Britain. He also served as a peace commissioner in Ghent in the negotiations ending the War of 1812.

Clay's efforts to forge the Missouri Compromise were the first of several such undertakings to deal with the expansion and spread of slavery. Clay was himself a slave owner, but he favored the emancipation of slaves and their resettlement in Africa.

The election of 1824 was decided in the House of Representatives. John Quincy Adams won the presidency and selected Clay as his secretary of state—a move that encouraged critics to claim a “corrupt bargain.” Clay gained widespread support in his home state and throughout the West for advocacy of the American System, which was intended to allow the United States to become economically independent and nationally self-sufficient.

In 1831, Clay returned to the Senate and emerged as the leader of the National Republican Party, which later became the Whig Party. He lost a bid for the presidency in 1832, but was important in Jackson's and Biddle's Bank War and the Tariff of 1833.

Clay's perhaps most notable achievement came in the Compromise of 1850, in which the “Great Compromiser” managed temporarily to tame sectional passions. The Whig Party lasted only a short while following Clay's death, but its ideas, particularly the American System, were taken over by the new Republican Party.

## JOURNEY TWO FIGURES & IMAGES

### ELIZABETH KECKLEY

According to her autobiography, *Behind the Scenes, or Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House* Elizabeth Keckley was born a slave in 1818 or 1819, near Dinwiddie Court House, Virginia.

Keckley had no formal education, but learned dressmaking skills from her mother, Agnes Hobbs. Her father, George, was enslaved by a different family and the only time Elizabeth got to see her father was on Easter and Christmas as he lived one hundred miles away.



When she was four years old she was given the task of caring for an infant of Armistead and Mary Burwell. Her job was to rock the cradle, keep flies off, and keep the baby from crying. She was beaten when she accidentally rocked the cradle too hard and the baby fell.

Elizabeth lived with her mother throughout her teenage years. At the age of 14, she was loaned out to the son of her master, Robert Burwell, upon his marriage to Margaret Robertson. Both Burwells, as well as a neighbor, beat Elizabeth often because of her superior attitude. While living with the Burwells, Elizabeth gave birth to a son through the forced relationship with a friend and neighbor of her owners. She named her son George.

In 1852 Elizabeth married James Keckley. Not much is known of James Keckley.

Elizabeth was given to Colonel Burwell's daughter, Ann P. Garland, when Ann and her husband moved to St. Louis hoping to improve their fortunes. After the move, Elizabeth was promised she could purchase her and her son's freedom for \$1200. In November, 1855, with the assistance of her female customers of St. Louis, she raised the money to buy her freedom.

Elizabeth left St. Louis in the spring of 1860 after the death of her husband. She arrived in Baltimore and opened a school for young black girls where they were taught etiquette and sewing. The school was unsuccessful and Elizabeth then moved to Washington D.C.

In November 1860, Elizabeth began working as a dressmaker for Varina Davis, the wife of Senator Jefferson Davis. Mrs. Davis did not want Elizabeth to stay in Washington when the war broke out and offered to take her south with the family when they left the city. However, Elizabeth stayed and with a stroke of luck became the personal dressmaker to Mary Lincoln.

Elizabeth seemed to be the only friend Mary had and soon became her confidante, tolerating her often unstable temperament and sharp tongue. Elizabeth was privy to many personal conversations between Lincoln and Mary. Elizabeth comforted Mary when her son, Willie died. It was Elizabeth whom Mary sent for when her husband died, and Elizabeth accompanied Mary to Chicago after she left the White House and moved to Chicago.

## BALL GOWNS IN THE BLUE ROOM

### **Harriett Lane**

Unique among first ladies, Harriet Lane acted as hostess for her uncle, James Buchanan, the only president who never married. After her parents died when she was eleven, her uncle had become her guardian.

As sectional tensions increased, she painstakingly worked out seating arrangements for her weekly formal dinner parties, to give dignitaries their proper precedence and still keep political foes apart. Her tact did not falter, but as sectional hostilities increased, her task became impossible. Seven states had seceded by the time Buchanan left office and thankfully returned with his niece to his spacious country home, Wheatland, near Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Harriet was the first woman to have the title “first lady” and she was immensely popular. After her death, she donated her sizeable art collection to the Smithsonian, founded St. Alban’s School in Washington, D.C., and endowed a home for invalid children at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. She had three Coast Guard vessels named for her, one of which is still in service.

### **Adele Cutts Douglas**

Adele Cutts Douglas grew up in Washington, where her good looks, winning personality, and impressive family connections made her a favorite of local society. Her father was the nephew of Dolley Madison, whose Lafayette Square mansion became Adele Cutts’s second home. Her aunt, Rose Greenhow, also an important hostess, was later convicted of spying for the Confederacy. Cutts met the widower Senator Stephen A. Douglas in 1856, when he had narrowly lost the Democratic presidential nomination to James Buchanan. They wed after a brief courtship, and Stephen Douglas’s substantial fortune supported Adele Douglas’s brilliant salon, where together they commanded substantial political power. During the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858, Adele Douglas traveled with her husband through Illinois, and like her husband, she became Lincoln’s warm friend. She accompanied Douglas through his travels south during the 1860 presidential campaign and was by his side when he died in Chicago the following spring. Adele Cutts Douglas later married a career army officer, and raised their six children in the western territories.

### **Mary Ellen Marcy McClellan**

Mary Ellen Marcy married George McClellan in 1860. They had one son and one daughter. Mrs. McClellan was the daughter of a superior army officer, Randolph B. Marcy, who later served as General McClellan’s chief of staff. Mary Ellen Marcy had previously declined McClellan’s marriage proposal, but when her father refused to let her marry the man she preferred, she married McClellan.

### Katherine Jane (Kate) Chase

In 1861 Salmon Chase accepted the newly-elected President Lincoln's offer to serve as his treasury secretary. He took up residence with 20-year-old Kate, his daughter, at 6th and E Streets Northwest in Washington, D.C. At a White House party shortly after the presidential inauguration, Kate, due to her beauty and charm, outshone Mary Lincoln. From then on the first lady was jealous and distrustful of her younger rival, all the more so because Chase openly thought himself more qualified than Lincoln for the presidency. Chase had vied for the Republican presidential nomination in 1860 which Lincoln had won. Chase viewed himself as a more bona fide abolitionist.

Kate Chase set herself up as the hostess whose soirees were the most eagerly attended in the nation's capital; she became, effectively, the "Belle of the North." She visited battle camps in the Washington area and befriended Union generals, offering her own views on the proper prosecution of the war.

### EDWIN STANTON

#### Secretary of War

Edwin Stanton was born on December 19, 1814, in Steubenville, Ohio. His parents despised slavery and instilled this belief in their son.

Stanton's father died in 1827 and he was forced to leave school to help support his mother. In 1828, Stanton became a clerk at a local bookstore, tutoring himself by reading many of the books in the store. After a short time at Kenyon College he again became a bookstore clerk where he began to study law. In 1835, he passed the bar and argued his first case in court before the age of twenty-one.



Stanton joined a law firm in Cadiz, Ohio, and local voters elected him to be the prosecuting attorney in 1837. In 1839, after he opened a law practice, he was elected to several local positions.

He was appointed attorney general of the United States in December 1860 and he held this position until Abraham Lincoln took office in March 1861.

Politically, Stanton had been a long time supporter of the Democratic Party. He was certain that Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency would result in war. Stanton, however, supported the new Republican president's actions to keep the nation united. He even encouraged Lincoln to arm the slaves. Following the resignation of Simon Cameron as secretary of war in January 1862, Lincoln appointed Stanton to the office.

After Lincoln's assassination, Stanton clashed with Andrew Johnson. Stanton strongly supported civil rights legislation and Johnson was much more cautious on this issue. Johnson demanded Stanton's resignation, but he refused and Johnson fired him. This action angered many members of Congress and led to the passage of the Tenure of Office Act, which required Congressional approval before the removal of cabinet officers. After the



Senate acquitted Johnson of impeachment charges, Stanton immediately resigned as secretary of war on May 26, 1868.

Stanton returned to private life but remained active in politics. He actively campaigned for Ulysses S. Grant in the presidential election of 1868. Upon taking office, Grant appointed Stanton to the United States Supreme Court. Before Stanton could take office, he died on December 24, 1869.

#### SALMON P. CHASE

##### **Secretary of the Treasury**

Salmon Portland Chase was born on January 13, 1808, in Cornish, New Hampshire. His father died when Salmon was about nine years old, and Chase moved to Ohio to live with his uncle, Philander Chase. He enrolled at Dartmouth College, graduating with honors in 1826.



After graduation, Chase moved to Washington, D.C., where he taught school while studying law. Chase passed the bar examination in 1829 and moved to Cincinnati to set up his own law practice.

Chase originally associated himself with the Whig Party and was elected to the Cincinnati city council in 1840. In the 1840s, he became involved in the creation of the Liberty Party, a party dedicated to slavery's demise. In 1848, he helped organize the Free Soil Party in Ohio and contributed to the national Free Soil platform, which sought to limit slavery to the places it already existed. Chase was elected as U.S. senator in 1850. During his term in the Senate, he was actively involved in fighting against the expansion of slavery. He unsuccessfully opposed the Fugitive Slave Law, which was one part of the Compromise of 1850. He also spoke out against the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854.

In 1855, Chase successfully ran for governor of Ohio as a Republican and was reelected as governor in 1857. Chase also sought the Republican nomination for the presidency in 1856 and 1860, but he was unsuccessful. The principal reason for these losses was Chase's radical abolitionist views. In the meantime, Republicans regained control of the Ohio legislature in 1859 and chose to send Chase back to the U.S. Senate in 1860.

Only two days after taking his seat in the Senate, Chase resigned to become Abraham Lincoln's secretary of the treasury with the job of financing the Union war effort. During Chase's years as secretary of the treasury, the United States began to print "In God We Trust" on currency. Chase frequently disagreed with Lincoln and many believed that their disagreements were due to Chase's presidential ambitions. Chase was unsuccessful in gaining the Republican presidential nomination in 1864, losing to Lincoln as he had in 1860. Chase threatened to resign a number of times during his years as secretary of the treasury, ultimately following through on his threat in July 1864.

In spite of their disagreements, Lincoln still respected Chase, and when Chief Justice Roger Taney died in October 1864, Lincoln chose Chase to replace him. After Lincoln's assassination, Chase administered the presidential oath to Andrew Johnson. When Johnson was impeached in 1868, Chase presided over his trial in the Senate. Chase became less involved in politics as his health began to fail in the years after the Civil War.

During Chase's time as chief justice, the U.S. Supreme Court heard a number of important cases, including *Bradwell v. Illinois*. In this case, the court ruled that states that did not allow women to practice law were not in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. This set the precedent that women's rights were not granted by this amendment. In this case, Chase was the only justice to dissent.

Chase suffered a stroke in 1870 and in spite of poor health, returned to the bench in 1871. He presided as chief justice until his death. Chase received one final honor in 1934, when the United States Treasury chose to place his portrait on the ten thousand dollar bill.

#### GIDEON WELLES

##### **Secretary of the Navy**

Born in Glastonbury, Connecticut in 1802, Gideon Welles was part of a well-known political family. He graduated from the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy in Vermont. He first studied law and then began writing for the *Hartford Times*. In 1826, he became part-owner and editor of that newspaper, helping to transform it into a leading paper for the Democratic Party and the Jackson administration. From 1827-1835, he served as a Democrat in the Connecticut state legislature. In gratitude for his support, Jackson named Welles as Hartford's postmaster, a position he held from 1836-1841. In 1845 James K. Polk appointed him to head the Navy Department's Bureau of Provisions and Clothing.



In the mid-1850s, Welles joined the newly created Republican Party and, in 1856 ran unsuccessfully as the Republican gubernatorial candidate in Connecticut. In 1860, he served on the executive board of the Republican National Committee and as chair of the Connecticut delegation to the national convention in Chicago, where he helped defeat front-runner William Henry Seward. In 1861, Lincoln selected Welles as his secretary of the navy. Welles continued at that post until the end of Andrew Johnson's term, supporting the embattled Johnson against the Radical Republicans. Almost a decade after leaving office, he died in Hartford.

#### WILLIAM SEWARD

##### **Secretary of State**

Born in New York in 1801, Seward attended local schools before entering Union College at the age of fifteen. After graduating from Union in 1820, he studied law and was admitted to the bar. In 1823, he established himself in Auburn, New York. Auburn would remain his home for the rest of his life.

Intellectually adventurous, cheerful, and convivial—though somewhat vain—Seward naturally gravitated toward politics. He supported John Quincy Adams, the Anti-Masonic party, and, by 1834 the Whig Party. He served as

state senator and, in 1838, won his first term as governor. He was reelected in 1840. As a politician, Seward supported Whig economic programs, particularly internal improvements. However, he stirred controversy and antagonized some anti-foreign and anti-Catholic elements of the Whig party when he supported the demands of Catholics to have their children taught in public schools by teachers speaking the same language and sharing the same faith. His humanitarianism was also evident in his increasing interest in antislavery.

An election defeat in 1842 returned Seward to private law practice for seven years before he reentered politics with his election to the United States Senate. His victory owed much to the antislavery sentiment of both northern Whigs and Democrats during the Mexican War. During the famous session of Congress that resulted in the Compromise of 1850, Seward stood firmly against the Compromise and in favor of the unconditional admission of California as a free state. The manner in which he expressed his opposition to slavery—referring to a “higher law than the Constitution”—earned him an undeserved reputation for radicalism and helped undermine his presidential prospects.



During the 1850s, as the slavery issue intensified, Seward initially tried to keep the Whig party alive, but by the end of 1855, he joined the newly organized Republican Party. Although occasionally delivering blistering attacks on slavery and predicting an irrepressible conflict between slavery and freedom, Seward increasingly moderated his stand, perhaps in hopes of landing the Republican presidential nomination in 1860.

Failing to get the Republican nomination at Chicago in 1860, Seward campaigned extensively in the North for Lincoln. His prominence in the party led Lincoln to offer Seward the chief position in the cabinet, secretary of state.

CALEB B. SMITH

### **Secretary of the Interior**

Born in Massachusetts in 1808, Caleb Smith moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, as a boy. He enrolled at both the College of Cincinnati and Miami University, but did not graduate. Instead, he began to study law both in Cincinnati and, soon after, in Indiana, where he was admitted to the bar in 1828.

Smith became involved in politics as a Whig. He had an interest in the *Indiana Sentinel*, which publicized Whig policies and advanced his own political career. He served for many years in the Indiana House of Representatives, and during two sessions he was speaker. He was especially prominent in promoting internal improvements, such as canals and railroads.

In 1842, Smith won a seat in Congress, to which he was reelected in 1844 and 1846. He spoke on a number of issues, but particularly against the annexation of Texas and the war with Mexico. With the election of a Whig president, Zachary Taylor, in 1848, Smith was appointed to a seat on the board of commissioners to adjust claims against Mexico. In 1851, he returned to the practice of law and business.

With the collapse of the Whig party in the 1850s, Smith joined the Republican Party and became one of its leaders in Indiana. He seconded Lincoln's nomination at the 1860 Republican convention and campaigned vigorously for him. Smith's appointment to the cabinet as secretary of the interior was intended to recognize the state of Indiana, as well as to honor a promise made by Lincoln's managers for Smith's support at the convention. Smith served in the cabinet only until December 1862, when his failing health led to his resignation. Lincoln appointed him judge of the United States district court for Indiana, but a little more than a year later, in January 1864, Smith died.

#### MONTGOMERY BLAIR

##### **Postmaster General**

The eldest son of Francis P. Blair, Montgomery Blair was born in Kentucky in 1813, where he received his early education. Having been appointed to West Point by President Andrew Jackson, Blair graduated in 1835. He served briefly in the Seminole War before resigning his commission and returning to Kentucky to study law at Transylvania University.

Blair moved to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1837, practiced law, and served in a variety of offices during the 1840s, including mayor of St. Louis. In 1853, however, he moved to Maryland where he practiced law, chiefly before the Supreme Court. A Democrat, he was associated with the free-soil wing of the party, which advocated the non-extension of slavery. He won attention from antislavery advocates for his legal efforts on behalf of the slave, Dred Scott, whose petition for freedom was denied by the Supreme Court in 1857.

By 1860, Blair had joined the Republican Party, and he attended its Chicago convention as a delegate from Maryland. President Lincoln's selection of Blair as postmaster general was a recognition of his border state residence, former Democratic affiliation, family connections, and service to the party.

#### EDWARD BATES

##### **Attorney General**

Lincoln's attorney general, Edward Bates, was born in 1793 in Virginia, the son of a planter and merchant. His formal education was limited, but he received instruction from his father and relatives. He served briefly in a volunteer militia company during the War of 1812.

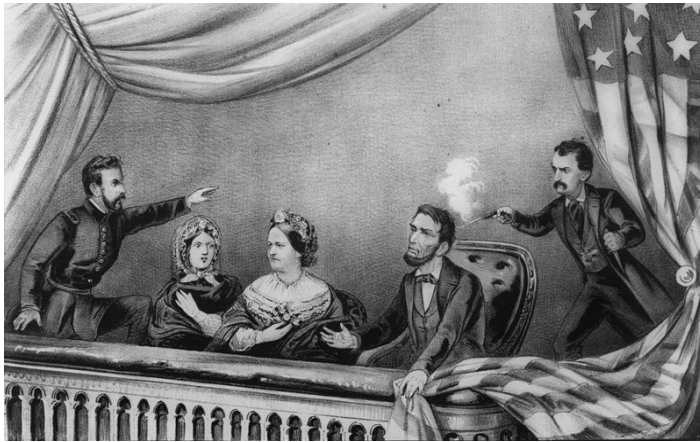
At the suggestion of his brother, who was secretary of the Missouri Territory, Bates went to St. Louis in 1814, studied law, and was licensed to practice two years later. He became involved in politics, holding several local offices, including attorney general, before being elected to Congress in 1826. As a National Republican, he opposed Andrew Jackson, a stand that contributed to his defeat for reelection in 1828. Bates returned to the state legislature and private law practice for a number of years. In the late 1840s, he established a national reputation as a leading spokesman for internal improvements and was offered a position in President Millard Fillmore's cabinet. Bates declined the post, however.

As the issue of slavery expansion intensified during the 1850s, Bates took his stand with those who favored keeping the territories free. He remained a Whig through its 1856 convention, but inevitably gravitated to the

Republican Party. As a border state conservative, Bates was widely mentioned as a presidential candidate for the 1860 Republican nomination. But at the Chicago convention, he never received more than forty-eight votes, and with the nomination of Lincoln, his candidacy collapsed. While Bates's border state and conservative credentials came up short at Chicago, they served him well when Lincoln selected his cabinet. Lincoln appointed him attorney general, and Bates became the first cabinet member to be chosen from the region west of the Mississippi River.

#### CLARA HARRIS & MAJOR HENRY RATHBONE

Clara Harris and her fiancé, Major Henry Rathbone, accompanied Abraham and Mary Lincoln to Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865, and were present during his assassination.



On that day, Mary Lincoln had invited several people, including Ulysses and Julia Grant, to attend the play *Our American Cousin*. All had declined her invitation for a variety of reasons. Mrs. Lincoln then asked the young couple to join the presidential party, and they accepted. Rathbone, who tried to thwart the assassin's escape, was severely wounded by Booth, who attacked Rathbone with a knife. Rathbone was slashed and stabbed, primarily in his left arm, and collapsed from a loss of blood.

Major Rathbone eventually recovered from his injuries and later married Clara on July 11, 1867. By an unusual familial inter-connection she was actually Rathbone's stepsister, as her father had married his mother after the death of their respective spouses. Ira Harris was thus Rathbone's stepfather, becoming his father-in-law as well.

Rathbone and Clara had three children. In 1882, he was appointed U.S. Consul to the Province of Hanover, where the family relocated. His mental health gradually became more unstable, and he murdered her on December 23, 1883. Their children, who were also almost killed by their father, went to live with their uncle, William Harris, in the United States. Henry Rathbone spent the rest of his life in the asylum for the criminally insane in Hildesheim, Germany. He was buried in Hildesheim next to Clara. His grave and his wife's were destroyed in 1952, as they had been abandoned and unattended since her death in 1883 and his death in 1911.